

EAST TIMOR EMERGENCY APPEAL

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- STOP INDONESIA'S STARVATION STRATEGY IN EAST TIMOR
- HALT THE SALE OF BRITISH WARPLANES TO INDONESIA
- PRESS FOR THE ADMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS TO ALL PARTS OF EAST TIMOR
- PRESS FOR THE UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL OF INDONESIAN TROOPS

We address this urgent appeal to all friends and supporters of: **BCIET** (British Campaign for an Independent East Timor), **TAPOL** (British Campaign for the Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners), London Representatives of the **Free Papua Movement**, **Amnesty International** (British Section), **CAAT** (Campaign Against the Arms Trade), **Catholic Institute for International Relations**, **COBRA** (Committee for Basic Human Rights in the ASEAS Countries), **Pax Christi**, **Human Rights Network**, **NPC** (National Peace Council), and other organisations and friends.

Thousands starve in Indonesian camps in East Timor

The living conditions in camps in Indonesian-held parts of East Timor have shocked members of a delegation of foreign ambassadors, who recently visited there. In early September the ambassadors, and some members of the press, were escorted by the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr. **Mochtar Kusumaatmadja**, to selected areas of East Timor, namely Dili, Baucau, Maliana and Remexio. The visit was closely supervised by Indonesian officials, and the guests were flown everywhere by helicopter.

Several of the ambassadors made strong statements about the wretched conditions and great suffering in the camps they saw at Maliana and Remexio, which were described by Indonesian officials as "relief centres", or "rehabilitation centres". The Canadian ambassador, Mr **Glen Shortcliff** said that the people in the camps are in "a desperate situation . . . they are starving in many cases; they are desperately ill; they need help in terms of immediate relief—food, clothing, basic medical care" (*Australian Broadcasting Commission*, Radio News and "News from Asia", 10th September 1978). Malaria, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and advanced malnutrition were reported to be common in the camps, and it was also reported that there was cholera in the Remexio camp. The children in the Remexio camp reminded one ambassador of "victims of an African famine" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 29th, 1978). Although the ambassadors were appalled at what they saw, one Timorese official in the Indonesian administration said that they had not seen the worst. "At Suai things are much worse and there are many more people" he said (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 29th, 1978).

Altogether there are fourteen similar "relief" camps in Indonesian-held areas outside of Dili and Baucau. The ambassadors were told by church aid workers that in one of these camps alone *five hundred East Timorese were dying each month* (*Australian Broadcasting Commission*, Radio News, 9th September 1978). If this figure is extended to include other camps, the death toll adds alarmingly to the already horrifying estimate that 100,000 (one-sixth of the population) have been killed since the Indonesian invasion in December 1975.

A STRATEGY OF STARVATION

The Indonesian tactic appears to be one of starving the entire population into submission. Large areas of agricultural land in FRETILIN-held territory have been devastated by aerial bombardments. FRETILIN have consistently reported in their broadcasts (see, for example, *East Timor News*, no. 26, 21st February 1978) that Indonesia has resorted to the use of defoliants, and the Australian Senator **Michael Hodgeman** has claimed in Parliament that between 30,000 and 40,000 East Timorese have died as a result of Indonesian use of defoliants (*The Guardian*, 14th September 1978). Australian Labour Senator **Ken Fry** has said that "Indonesia must take full responsibility for the suffering of the East Timorese", and Government Senator **Bernard Kilgariff** has said that "Indonesian actions in East Timor have been nothing short of genocide" (*The Australian*, September 12th 1978).

INDONESIAN CAMPAIGN TO REMOVE EAST TIMOR ISSUE FROM AGENDA OF U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Apart from using the "relief" camps for isolating the East Timorese population from FRETILIN-held areas, the Indonesian government has also tried to use them to serve their concerted diplomatic campaign to win international support for their annexation of East Timor, and to have the East Timor issue removed from the agenda of the 33rd General Session of the United Nations General Assembly in November this year. In the campaign the East Timorese in the camps were presented to the ambassadors as "victims of FRETILIN". It is officially estimated that there are some 20,000 of these "victims", but judging from a report by **Warwick Beutler** (*Australian Broadcasting Commission*, "News from Asia", September 10th, 1978) which indicates that the Maliana camp alone holds 18,000 people, the official estimate of 20,000 would seem very low indeed. Even so, 20,000 "victims of FRETILIN" contrasts oddly with other Indonesian assertions that there are no more than 200 FRETILIN left—and a claim at a United Nations Special Committee of Decolonisation meeting (1123rd, 25th August 1978) by **Purbo Sugiarto** that "so-called FRETILIN no longer exists in Indonesia".

BACKGROUND:

1. East Timor was formerly a Portuguese colony in the Eastern half of the island of Timor, just to the north of Australia. The western half is part of the Republic of Indonesia.
2. On 28th November 1975 FRETILIN, with popular support, proclaimed the independence of East Timor.
3. After numerous threats aimed at compelling the people of East Timor to integrate, Indonesia invaded East Timor on 7th December 1975.
4. Today the people of East Timor, led by FRETILIN, still resist Indonesian attempted integration. Indonesian armed forces control no more than 30% of the territory.



The real nature of the camps begins to emerge in the report of Warwick Beutler mentioned above. He was told that about half the inmates of the Maliana camp had been "returned to their villages" after they had been "rehabilitated" and that the remainder were still receiving "instruction". It has also been reported that Indonesian guards, who are often short of food themselves, have been forcing the camp population to grow crops (*East Timor News*, no. 42, September 21st, 1978). Yet it is clear from the ambassadors' reports that the harvest of this forced cultivation has not benefitted the East Timorese in the camps.

RELIEF AS A POLITICAL WEAPON

Four of the visiting ambassadors (from Australia, Canada, Japan and the United States) have called for the urgent implementation of an international relief operation. Unfortunately relief from overseas must be authorised by the Indonesian government, and the Indonesian Foreign Minister has replied that aid would only be accepted from donor countries which "acknowledge Indonesia's sovereignty" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, September 11th, 1978). Since its full-scale invasion of East Timor in 1975 Indonesia has adamantly refused to admit the International Red Cross into East Timor. This intransigence has been severely criticised by both Amnesty International and the United Nations. Indonesia claims that it can administer aid itself. However, any aid that Indonesia accepts is channelled through the Indonesian military administration of East Timor, and the Indonesian military is legendary in its corruption. There have been many reports that much of the aid accepted so far has stopped far short of the needy. For example, from Catholic sources we have learnt that in March 1976 the Indonesian Red Cross refused to distribute food aid unless recipients stated that they supported integration with East Timor. Further, a large amount of aid sent to Atambua by the Australian Red Cross was never distributed. In fact Indonesian soldiers in Atambua showed them trucks which had been sent to distribute dried milk and other aid, but which had been commandeered by the military. Even the ex-Governor (Indonesian backed) of East Timor, **Arnaldo Reis Araujo**, has confirmed that very little aid sent to East Timor reaches those who need it (*Tempo*, July 8th, 1978). In Australia Senator **Carrick** has claimed that Indonesia had sufficient supplies of food and medicine for the camps, but that the problem is one of "distribution" (*Canberra Times*, 13th September 1978).

BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S ROLE

The British government has approved the sale by British Aerospace Corporation of Hawk ground attack/trainer aircraft to Indonesia. These planes are particularly suited for the war in East Timor. They fly low and can saturate large areas of

ground with cluster bombs, which also, according to the Defence Sales Organization's *Defence Equipment Catalogue*, have a "high kill probability against a range of hard and soft targets encountered in the battlefield and immediate tactical area". The hawk can also drop napalm cannisters and defoliants.

The first British Aerospace deal, concluded in April this year, provided for the sale of eight Hawks. It has now been learnt that an additional deal has doubled the sale to sixteen. In response to numerous protests about the first British Aerospace contract, the British Government has stated that the aircraft are being sold as trainers, and that they are not equipped for combat. Even if this were so, conversion for combat duty is a simple "on site" operation. No assurance has been given that combat equipment will not be supplied in future. The Government has also given a very misleading picture of the situation in East Timor in its replies. The Foreign Office has said, for example, that estimates of the numbers killed in East Timor are exaggerated and that the fighting has been reduced to "skirmishing" which is said to be "on a much reduced scale". No source is given for this information, although it closely approximates the portrayal of the situation given by the Indonesian government.

MYTH AND REALITY IN EAST TIMOR

The ambassadors' visit to East Timor—like that of **President Suharto**, who, under heavy guard, visited only two towns three months ago—is part of the Indonesian military and diplomatic drive to convince other governments that it has successfully integrated East Timor into the Indonesian Republic. The scale of the military undertaking has been massive, involving at least 30,000 troops with heavy air and sea backing, including the use of U.S.-supplied Bronco-OV 10s.

The diplomatic campaign has also been intensive, but reports by independent observers have demonstrated that many Indonesian statements about East Timor are false. Major inconsistencies in Indonesia's own official statements similarly create grave doubts about their accuracy.

Although the ambassadors registered shock at what they saw in the camps, their position is hardly less cynical than that of the Indonesian Government. They called only for piecemeal solutions, and closed their eyes to the real cause of the distress they so movingly described. They failed to condemn Indonesia although:

1. *Indonesia's attempted annexation and destruction of crops has created the camps, and the appalling conditions for the Timorese within them.*
2. *The Indonesian government is withholding aid by placing political conditions on humanitarian relief.*

What you can do

- Write to the **Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs** stressing that Britain must urge Indonesia to admit the International Red Cross to *all* parts of East Timor. Urge him to cancel the permit for British Aerospace to sell Hawk warplanes to Indonesia. Condemn Indonesia's starvation policy, and press him to call for an unconditional withdrawal of Indonesian troops from East Timor:

Dr. David Owen, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Downing Street, London SW1A 2AL

- Write to the **Secretary of State for Defence** urging immediate cancellation of the Hawk deal:

Mr. Fred Mulley, The Secretary of State for Defence, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB

- Write to your MP asking his help in pressing the British Government along the lines suggested above.

- Raise this matter with any local organisation you are associated with, your Amnesty group, local church group, local Labour Party branch, and other organizations. Obtain their support to raise this matter with their national body.

- Send us any correspondence you send and receive.

- Order more copies of this leaflet for wider distribution.

- Any contributions towards the cost of this campaign would be welcome.

NAME ADDRESS

Enclosed is a contribution of £ (Please make cheques payable to "Hawk Campaign")

Return to: **Campaign to Stop the Sale of Hawk Warplanes to Indonesia**, 40 Concanon Road, London SW2 (274 5945)
or 8A Treport Street, London SW18 (874 3262)